of officers are entitled to a compensation ranging from Rs. 75,780 to Rs. 1,69,390 while the families of Ratings are entitled to amounts ranging from Rs. 70,371 to Rs. 83,115. In addition, the Seamen's Welfare Fund Society registered under the Charitable Trust Act has decided to make a payment of Rs. 3,000 for each of the Ratings as an *ex-gratia* one time financial assistance.

Insurance for Cargo and employees in steamer

2523. SHRI C. HARIDAS: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any system for Insurance of the passengers as well as the cargo carried by the steamers; and

(b) if so, what is the criterion for the award of these insurance claims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Under the Merchant Shipping Act, there is no provision for the insurance of passengers or the cargo carried by steamers. Parties interested have the option to take out voluntary insurance as per the Insurance Act applicable.

(b) Insurance is payable as per the criteria covered in the insurance policy and the amount for which insurance has been taken by the individual by payment of premium.

वैगनों के आबंटन में कटौती

2524. **श्री प्यारेलाल खंडेलवाल** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या मध्य प्रदेश राज्य को उसकी आवश्यकता का केवल 30 प्रतिशत कोल वैगन ही आबंटित किया जा रहा है ; और

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि संचलक, मूवमेंट आफ कोल, रेलवे (यातायात) और विभागीय अधीक्षक, बिलासपुर द्वारा इसमें 50 प्रतिशत और वगनों की कटौती की जा रही है और इस प्रकार उपभोक्ता इकाइयों को उनकी कोल वैगनों संबंधी आवश्यकता का कोल केवल 15 प्रतिशत वैगन ही आबंटित किया जा रहा है ?

रेल मंत्री (श्री बंसी लाल) : (क) जी, नहीं ।

(ख) जी, नहीं । राज्य स्तर पर नियंत्रित प्राथमिकताओं के संबंध में प्राप्त मध्य प्रदेश के सभी वैध कार्यक्रम सामान्य रूप से स्वीकृत किये जा रहे हैं ।

Facilities of free card passes to bookstall contractors

2525. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of free Ist Class and IInd Class card passes issued to the bookstall contractors other than M|s. A. H. Wheeler and Co.;

(b) whether there are some bookstall contractors who have been refused this facility; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for this discriminatory treatment?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) At present, seventy-two second class card passes have been issued to mobile-library-*cum*-book-stall contractors for management of the mobile units.

(b) and (c) Card passes are being issued to M|s. A. H. Wheeler and Co. as per the provisions of agreement with them. In case of other static bookstall contractors, there is no such provision in the agreements and hence card passes are not issued to them.

Karur-Dindigul-Madurai-Tuticorin-Tirunelveli Line

2526. SHRI PARVATHANENE UPENDRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that no definite date for the completion of Karur-Dindigul-Madurai-Tuticorin-Tirunelveli railway line has yet been fixed;

(b) whether it is a fact that even the first stage of the project which was expected to be completed by December, 1984, has not been completed so far;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for the delay and the escalation in cost in relation to cost estimated at the time of sanctioning the project; and

(d) by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The first stage i.e., parallel B. G. line from Tirunelveli to Milavittan (53 Kms.) has been opened to goods traffic on 6-5-1985.

(c) The work is being progressed according to availability of resources. The increase in cost over the cost estimated at the time of approving the project is due to mainly on account of increase of rates of materials and labour.

(d) Its completion will depend on availability of resources in the coming years.

Freight traffic

2527. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the freight traffic handled by the Railways during 1983-84 and 1984-85;

(b) what is the estimated freight traffic during 1985-86 and 1986-87;

(c) whether the existing railway system are in a position to handle the increased freight traffic; and

(d) if not, what measures have been taken or proposed to be taken by Government to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) The Originating revenue earning freight traffic during the years 1983-84 and 1984-85 was as under:

Year.	*Tonnage in millions.*
1983-84	230.12
1984-85	236.29 **(Provisional)**

(b) and (c) The budgetted target of revenue earning freight traffic for 1985-86 is 250 million tonnes. This target is expected to be achieved despite some constraints of locomotives, wagons etc. Assessment of target for the year 1986-87 has not been made so far.

(d) Does not arise.

Recommendation of the National Shipping Board

2528. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state.

(a) whether the National Shipping Board has submitted its report;

(b) if so, what are its major recommendations; and

(c) whether merger of sick and small Indian shipping companies has also been recommended if so, whether the recommendation has been accepted by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Ship waiting for berths at major ports

2529. SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI:
DR. SHANTI G. PATEL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are large number of ships/vessels waiting for berths at major ports like Calcutta, Bombay, Visakhapatnam and Madras;